Mount Saint Mary's University | Los Angeles

mount

magazine

spring/summer 2017

Join the movement

Mount Wellness: Getting healthy and resilient together

Student leaders: Learning to lead their own way

Zooming in on life: Film student focuses on L.A.

Out-of-this-world discovery: Meteorite found on campus

from the president

THESE ARE EXCITING TIMES FOR US. Our Mount Wellness movement has begun and as a community we will focus on making smarter food choices, sleeping better, managing our stress levels and getting more physical activity. We will become healthier and more resilient, as individuals and together as a community. We will give our students the tools they need to be successful in achieving their health goals. We will support them and guide them. And when they need a little push, a little motivation, we will be there for them.

I invite you to turn the pages to read about the events that launched the wellness movement on both our campuses, and learn about our strategies and the four areas of focus that form the tenets of Mount Wellness: Eat Green, De-Stress, Sleep Well and Move More.

Another initiative that I am proud to support is Mount Leads, which embeds leadership opportunities and education throughout the University. The magazine highlights some of our leadership scholars who embody the four core principles of Mount Leads: awareness of self/personal wellness, ethical decision-making and integrity, critical thinking and communication skills, and active citizenship. One of our leadership scholars, Melanie Sava '17, this year's president of the Student Government Association and an award-winning member of the Moot Court and Mock Trial teams, is going to Yale Law School next fall — after having been accepted into all Ivy League law schools. Talk about unstoppable!

Initiatives such as Mount Leads and Mount Wellness work in concert to help our students build skills that they will carry with them throughout their lives. We want our students and graduates to be healthy so they can be strong, resilient leaders.

We invite you to make the commitment to wellness with us. Join the movement!

Sincerely,

Ann McElaney-Johnson

ABOUT US
Mount Saint Mary's is the only women's university in Los Angeles and one of the most diverse in the nation. The University is known nationally for its research on gender equity, its innovative health and science programs, and its commitment to community service. As a leading liberal arts institution, Mount Saint Mary's provides year-round, flexible and online programs at the undergraduate and graduate level. Weekend, evening and graduate programs are offered to both women and men. Mount alums are engaged, active, global citizens who use their knowledge and skills to better themselves, their communities and the world. msmu.edu

Mount Saint Mary's University is a diverse community committed to providing an environment that is free from discrimination on the basis of any characteristic protected by federal, state or local law, ordinance or regulation.

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ARLENE VALDES '20 RUNS THE FIRE TRAIL BEHIND THE CHALON CAMPUS. PHOTO BY CARRIE ROSEMA.

updates

PHOTO BY STEVEN GEORGES

HARDWOOD HOOPS

◀ THE FIRST SEASON of Mount Saint Mary's new club basketball team is in the books.

During 2016-2017, the Athenians competed in games and regional tournaments against the likes of club counterparts at UCLA, Loyola Marymount University, Grand Canyon University, California State University, Northridge, University of California, Irvine, and California Polytechnic State University.

The University's club sports program is poised to grow as more incoming students choose the Mount based, in part, on the opportunity to play competitive sports. In addition to basketball, Mount Saint Mary's has launched teams in volleyball and soccer over the past few years.

Sports programming is one spoke in the evolving wellness wheel at the University. Beyond the competition, sports help build leadership, confidence, energy and camaraderie.

"I play basketball at Mount Saint Mary's because I love the game and because I can relieve a lot of stress by playing," says Liliana McMillan-Ruiz '20, a film, media and social justice major. "Wellness is all about balancing mind, body and soul, and the Mount helps me do that."

WELLNESS MOVEMENT LAUNCH

▲ THE MOUNT WELLNESS movement is a go. Hundreds of students joined in official kick-off events at Mount Saint Mary's Chalon and Doheny campuses on Feb. 9 and Feb. 15. The launches featured health and wellness activities, delicious food, plenty of entertainment — and daylong slates of physical challenges such as rock climbing, yoga, hiking, sports and self-defense seminars.

However, Mount Wellness is much more than a two-day event. This movement is a long-term, comprehensive campaign designed to help members of the Mount community achieve their wellness goals so that they can be leaders and wellness advocates in their jobs, their homes and their communities.

"Leadership means accepting new and exciting opportunities and rising up to tough challenges," says President Ann McElaney-Johnson. "That takes resilience. And to be resilient, you need to be healthy and strong. That's why Mount Saint Mary's is focusing on health and wellness."

This initiative is based on a needs assessment that involved more than 1,300 students, faculty and staff members.

Learn more about Mount Wellness at **msmu.edu/wellness**, and in our feature on **page 14** of this issue.

U.S. POET LAUREATE AT DOHENY

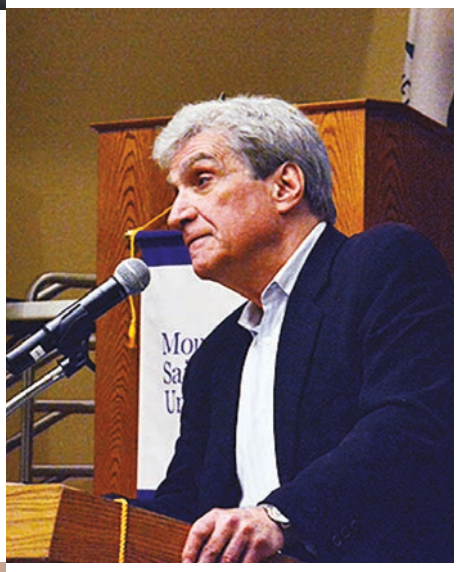
▼ THROUGHOUT LOS ANGELES on Jan. 22 rain poured, but those who made it into the Mount's Rose Hills Auditorium that evening were warmed by the passionate readings offered by former U.S. Poet Laureate Robert Pinsky. The poet's improvised talk, "Rusted is Living, Polished is Dead," offered timely poetics on democracy, based on a 19th-century lecture given by art and social critic John Ruskin. Mount Saint Mary's hosted and co-sponsored the event — led by its MA Humanities program — in partnership with the Ruskin Art Club, L.A.'s oldest arts association. Robert Pinsky served an unprecedented three terms as U.S. poet laureate. In addition to his career as an esteemed civic poet, Pinsky is also an award-winning critic, essayist, translator and teacher.

BRINGING D.C. TO THE MOUNT

▲ THE U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION AND THE WHITE HOUSE hosted a town hall meeting at Mount Saint Mary's Doheny Campus last October. The event featured, *above*, then-U.S. Secretary of Education John B. King Jr. and alumna Alejandra Ceja '96, executive director of the White House Initiative on Educational Excellence for Hispanics.

The town hall drew a large crowd, including students from local colleges, universities and high schools. Discussions focused on issues of college accessibility, affordability and resources available for students. "Information should not be a barrier to our success," Ceja said, "and we shouldn't have to rely on luck" to claim a well-rounded education.

Ceja credited Mount Saint Mary's for opening her eyes to new possibilities. At the Mount, Ceja was a Student Ambassador, president of Latinas Unidas and an AmeriCorps participant. She also participated in the Women's Leadership Program and made her first trip to Washington, D.C., as a scholarship participant in the Public Leadership Education Network (PLEN). The town hall was held in partnership with We Are Mitú, a digital engagement media brand for young Latinos. *Below, Sec. King Jr. with Mount Saint Mary's students.*



STATUS OF WOMEN AND GIRLS

▲ TO STAND UP FOR THEIR COMMUNITIES, their families and their futures, women must first stand up for themselves. This is one of the key takeaways from the release of the 2017 Report on the Status of Women and Girls in California™, a comprehensive compilation of current research focusing on the issues and trends affecting California's 19.7 million women and girls. Each year, a public event highlights the year's key findings and generates discussions among policymakers, experts and community leaders. On March 23, Mount Saint Mary's convened a forum on health and wellness that showcased experts dedicated to ensuring the physical, mental and spiritual health of women and girls everywhere. *Above, some of the Report's authors with President Ann McElaney-Johnson and Academy Award-winner Geena Davis, founder of the Geena Davis Institute on Gender in Media housed at Mount Saint Mary's.*

Following the main program, Mount Saint Mary's University co-hosted an Architects of Change conversation with Emmy and Peabody Award-winning reporter and producer Maria Shriver, *below*. Shriver moderated a discussion with Academy Award-winner and *goop* founder Gwyneth Paltrow and Dr. Roberta Brinton, director of the Center for Innovation in Brain Science at the University of Arizona Health Sciences. The talk focused on the connection between women's brains and their bodies, and a portion of the proceeds from the event benefitted The Women's Alzheimer's Movement.

For a recap of the event and to read the Report, visit msmu.edu/statusofwomen.

SESSIONS WITH A SENATOR

▲ CALIFORNIA SEN. HOLLY J. MITCHELL currently serves as the University's public servant in residence and is teaching a spring semester seminar on women in public service. Through a series of sessions, she shared with students her path to elected office and her career in the state legislature, and discussed bills currently moving through the Senate. The last session was a hearing of the Select Committee on Women and Inequality, held April 21 at the Doheny Campus, and students were invited to attend the meeting.

STANDING UP FOR MALAYSIAN WOMEN

FOR 14 YEARS, THE PAT REIF MEMORIAL LECTURE has honored the legacy of Dr. Patricia A. Reif, IHM, a scholar, educator and social justice advocate. Mount Saint Mary's Department of Religious Studies has provided ongoing support of the series, and the University again hosted this year's event, which featured Ivy Nallammah Josiah. Josiah is the executive director of the Women's Aid Organization, the leading organization in Malaysia challenging domestic violence against women and promoting women's human rights. She spoke about her work in a public lecture Oct. 25 at the University's Rose Hills Auditorium.

LESSONS FROM A FORMER PRESIDENT

▲ "LEADERSHIP," SAID PRESIDENT JOYCE BANDA, "is about falling in love with the people you serve…serving the people with selflessness, with sacrifice, and with the need to put the common good ahead of personal interests." That was one of many leadership lessons imparted by Banda — who served as the first female president of Malawi and is now a distinguished fellow with the Women in Public Service Project (WPSP) — at Mount Saint Mary's Chalon Campus on Oct. 24. The conversation, moderated by Lia Roberts, PhD, assistant professor of history and political science, presented an opportunity to promote women's global leadership. In addition to sharing her own story, Banda engaged Mount students on topics ranging from gender equality to how to ignite change as emerging leaders. Banda's visit was presented by the WPSP, of which Mount Saint Mary's is a member. An initiative of the Global Women's Leadership Initiative at The Wilson Center, the WPSP has a bold, global goal: By 2050, at least 50 percent of all decision-making positions in public service will be held by women.

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AMPLIFYING OUR VOICE

▲ AS MOUNT SAINT MARY'S looks forward to this fall's Women's Leadership Conference on Sept. 16, it does so with momentum generated from last fall's conference. More than 400 emerging and established women leaders took part in the 2016 gathering, with speakers sharing their expertise from across the professional spectrum. The conference seeks to help participants enhance their existing leadership skills and gain a better understanding of themselves, as well as their roles as leaders. Interactive sessions are designed to educate, motivate and empower women to transform their lives, teams, organizations and communities.

"At Mount Saint Mary's, we believe leadership can be developed," says Rosalyn Kempf, EdD, director of Women's Leadership and Student Involvement at the University. "It's what we impart to our students every day, and this conference enables attendees to learn practical leadership skills, too."

The fall 2017 conference will focus on the healthy, resilient leader. Attendees will learn practical skills to achieve wellness, balance and the ability to de-stress so they can effectively lead. Full details and registration are available at msmu.edu/WLC.

TAKING STEM TO THE CITY

▲ THE MOUNT IS GETTING ACCUSTOMED to being a guest of honor at the Mayor's Getty House. In 2015, the University's initial research for a special Report on the Status of Women and Girls in Los Angeles was shared at a Getty House event hosted by Mayor Eric Garcetti and First Lady Amy Elaine Wakeland. Then, this past fall, faculty and students from Mount Saint Mary's STEM programs (science, technology, engineering and math) attended the "Women in STEM" leadership event hosted at the Getty House by L.A.'s First Lady. In addition to Athenians from STEM majors, several MSMU faculty members were invited to attend, including: Jennifer Chotiner, PhD, chair of biological sciences; Sylvine Deprele, PhD, associate professor of physical sciences and mathematics; Luiza Nogaj, PhD, associate professor of biological sciences; and Stacey Peterson, PhD, associate professor of biological sciences.

WOMEN'S ISSUES CHAMPION

▲ THE NEW CENTER for the Advancement of Women has its leader. Emerald Archer, PhD, has dedicated her career to studying questions related to gender equity and women's representation in non-traditional domains. It's a background that will serve her well as she seeks to promote and increase gender equity across California and beyond.

Previously, Archer served as chair of politics and history at Woodbury University, where she was also the associate dean of the College of Liberal Arts. Her first book, "Women, Warfare and Representation: American Servicewomen in the Twentieth Century," will be published in August. She received her doctorate in political science from the University of California, Santa Barbara.

For info on the Center, go to msmu.edu/About-MSMU/Center-for-the-Advancement-of-Women/.

IMPACT ON STUDENT LEADERSHIP

▲ THE ACCOLADES FOR THE MOUNT'S LEADERSHIP PROGRAM keep coming. The Leadership Scholar Program has been selected for the Outstanding Leadership Spotlight Program of the Year Award, which was presented at the 2017 NASPA Student Affairs Administrators in Higher Education's Annual National Conference in San Antonio, Texas, in March. This award was given for the significant impact that this program has made on the community and its participants. Also at the conference, Rosalyn Kempf, PhD, *above*, director of women's leadership and student involvement and acting assistant vice president for student affairs, received the prestigious award for Outstanding Contribution to Student Leadership.

VISITING WRITERS, INSPIRED MINDS

◀ DISTINGUISHED AUTHORS paid visits to Mount Saint Mary's this school year, thanks to a new Visiting Writers and Artists Series. December brought Ottessa Moshfegh, *top left*, a fiction writer from New England whose works have earned her a Pushcart Prize, an O. Henry Award, the Fence Modern Prize in Prose and the Believer Book Award. In February, British author Geoff Dyer, *top right*, a National Book Critics Circle award-winner, read from his latest writings. In April, the Mount hosted Los Angeles' own acclaimed writer, Wendy C. Ortiz, *bottom right*, for two days of readings and discussions. On April 20, Morgan Parker, *bottom left*, read from her poetry. Parker, a widely published and anthologized writer, is also an editor, co-curator of Poets With Attitude and leader of The Other Black Girl Collective.

The Visiting Writers and Artists Series is presented by the University's MFA in Creative Writing program, and is led by JoAnna Novak, assistant professor of creative writing.

ART AS BRIDGE

▼ THE MOUNT'S JOSÉ DRUDIS-BIADA GALLERY hosted a long-term exhibit from November 2016 through March 2017: "The Bridge at the End of the Road." The show featured works by the late American artist Gilbert Franklin, an internationally significant sculptor of American modernism — who happens to be the father of MSMU art and graphic design instructor Nina Berson.

Berson catalogued her father's work after his death in 2004, and co-curated the exhibit, which closed following a special reception and celebration on March 5.

For more information about this and upcoming exhibitions, visit msmu.edu/gallery.

READY TO RUN

▲ WOMEN MAKE UP 50 percent of the U.S. population. Yet, in California, women currently account for only 22 percent of the state legislature. Nationally, women comprise just 19 percent of the U.S. Congress. Those are just two areas of public service where women's voices, experience and leadership are lacking — and needed. That's why, on April 8, Mount Saint Mary's once again hosted Ready to Run®, a nonpartisan campaign training program specifically designed to prepare women to run for office, get appointed to leadership positions, work on a campaign, or otherwise get involved in public service.

This year's opening keynote was delivered by Yvonne B. Burke, the first African-American woman to represent California in the U.S. Congress. Burke told the audience to "be ready to run but you also must be ready to serve. The issues that you care about and work on are going to affect lives you will never know."

Closing keynote speaker Barbara Boxer, the longtime former U.S. senator from California, echoed that advice in her speech: "The only honest way to get into politics is to have a reason. Not to be something. To do something."

For more on the program go to msmu.edu/r2r.

ONLINE MBA

ALL OF THE DISTINGUISHING QUALITIES of Mount Saint Mary's University's traditional MBA program are now available online. "We are thrilled that our well-respected MBA is now available to even more students in a scalable, browser-based format," says Christian B. Teeter, EdD, director of the MBA program. "This new program elevates the online learning experience for graduate business students."

The online MBA program also offers concentrations in entrepreneurship, organizational leadership and project management.

To learn more about the program, go to msmu.edu/mba.

SEEKING THE MUSE

▲ ON OCT. 1-2, the University convened a Latino & Latin American Writers Conference, spearheaded by the MFA in Creative Writing and MFA in Film & Television programs. The first-time conference brought together acclaimed and emerging Latino and Latin American writers and screenwriters such as, *above from left,* Roberto Castillo Udiarte, Anthony Seidman and Nylsa Martinez.

An annual writers' conference is now a staple at the Mount. Look for news soon on the 2017 conference, "To Live and Write in L.A.," at msmu.edu/LWC2017.

FOLLOWING IN THE FOOTSTEPS

▲ PRESIDENT ANN MCELANEY-JOHNSON and the University's CSJ Institute are again leading a journey to Le Puy, France, to follow in the footsteps of Mount Saint Mary's founders.

Members of the Mount community will travel to France May 28 to June 6. Follow the Mount's journey to the historic roots of its founding Sisters of St. Joseph of Carondelet; the University will chronicle its pilgrimage on social media using #MSMULePuy.

For more info, go to msmu.edu/csjinstitute.

COMMENCEMENT

▲ MOUNT SAINT MARY'S will celebrate two commencement exercises this year.

The traditional undergraduate commencement ceremony will take place Monday, May 8, at L.A.'s Microsoft Theatre. Farah Pandith, a diplomatic entrepreneur and foreign policy strategist, will be the day's distinguished speaker. Under Presidents George H.W. Bush, George W. Bush and Barack Obama, Pandith served in a wide variety of appointed positions, including as the first-ever Special Representative to Muslim Communities. In the role, she traveled to nearly 100 countries and launched global youth-focused initiatives and networks to counter violent extremism.

On Friday, May 5, the University's Graduate Division will hold its commencement exercises at St. Vincent de Paul Church next to the Doheny Campus. The ceremony's distinguished speaker will be Mount Saint Mary's President Emerita Jacqueline Powers Doud, PhD. Under her leadership at the Mount, many new academic programs were established, including several in the Graduate Division. She is the recipient of the Carondelet Medal, the highest honor bestowed by Mount Saint Mary's.

Both commencement exercises will be streamed online at msmu.edu/commencement.

NYT ACCOLADE FOR THE MOUNT

MORE EVIDENCE IS IN CONFIRMING THE TRANSFORMATIVE EFFECT of a Mount Saint Mary's University education. The New York Times recently released a study of economic diversity and student outcomes at colleges and universities across the United States. The Times ranked Mount Saint Mary's No. 1 in its overall mobility index, out of 578 selective private colleges. The measure reflects both access and outcomes, and it judged the Mount the most successful at helping students move up to greater income levels compared to what they could have expected to earn before attending the University.

According to the Times, 43 percent of students at Mount Saint Mary's can expect to move up two income quintiles (income levels established by the Times for this index) based on their University education. This percentage was greater than any other selective private college or university in the United States. The percentage also ranks the Mount third in California among all public and private colleges and universities, including schools such as No. 1-ranked California State University, Los Angeles. The Times' rankings were based on data collected by The Equality of Opportunity Project.

QUIZ SHOW WHIZ

▲ QUESTION: WHICH MOUNT SAINT MARY'S ATHENIAN competed in the 2016 Hispanic College Quiz Show? Answer: Lizbeth Hernandez '17, who made it to the final round of three contestants in the national competition. Hernandez appeared on television in the finals, and received a paid trip to the annual conference of the Hispanic Association of Colleges and Universities. When she's not mastering quiz shows, Hernandez, a social work major, volunteers at the Mount's Child Development Center and at A Place Called Home. She has also studied abroad in Spain.

THE GLOBAL POLITICS DEPARTMENT PRESENTS
TEDx MSMU
x = independently organized TED event
UNSTOPPABLE
AT MOUNT SAINT MARY'S UNIVERSITY, THE QUESTION ISN'T "WHO IS GOING TO LET ME?" BUT RATHER, "WHO IS GOING TO STOP ME?"
MAY 3, 2017
CHALON CAMPUS, HANNON THEATER
6-8 PM
WWW.TEDXMSMU.WEEBLY.COM @TEDXMSMU TEDXMSMU@GMAIL.COM

TED TALKS ON CAMPUS

▲ INSPIRE, EMPOWER, EDUCATE. That's what TEDTalks are known for. Now Mount students, alums and faculty will get their chance to inspire the community through the first TEDx event on campus. Presented by the Department of History and Political Science and produced entirely by students, TEDxMSMU will feature speakers from the Mount whose presentations will echo the University's Unstoppable theme: the question is not "Who is going to let me?" but rather "Who is going to stop me?" The event will be held on May 3, from 6 to 8 p.m., in the Chalon Campus' Hannon Theater. For more information, go to tedxmsmu.weebly.com.

Last October, the University offered an exclusive livestream of the sold-out TEDWomen2016 conference in San Francisco. Both campuses broadcast the day's program, which focused on the theme "It's About Time."

FACULTY

Millie Kidd, PhD, and **Ana Thorne**, PhD, attended the Association of Graduate Liberal Studies Programs (AGLSP) 2016 annual conference hosted by the University of Oklahoma in Oklahoma City on Oct. 20-22. Kidd, chair of the humanities program, was named to the AGLSP board of directors. Thorne, assistant professor in the humanities program, was named to the list of editorial reviewers-at-large for Confluence, the main AGLSP publication. At the conference, Thorne participated on a panel and delivered a presentation titled "Personal Transformation Built on the Liberal Arts Tradition."

Alan Lee, PhD, professor of physical therapy, presented "Connecting Strategies for the Classroom and Clinic: Use of Online Media for Medical Screening Instruction" at the Education Leadership Conference for Physical Therapy on Oct. 9 in Phoenix, Ariz.

Leah Fitzgerald, PhD, dean of nursing, attended the Organizational Leadership Network Program: Leadership Effectiveness and the American Association of Colleges of Nursing (AACN) annual fall meeting in October in Washington, D.C. She served as a facilitator at the AACN meeting. She also gave a podium presentation on Oral Health Risk Assessment at the Society of Pediatric Nurses annual conference on Nov. 4.

Gloria Nwagwu, PhD, assistant professor in the nursing department, did a podium and poster presentation of her research entitled "It's a Deal Breaker: Safe Sex Practice Among Homeless Male-to-Female Transgender Youths in Los Angeles" at the National Association of Nigerian Nurses in North America conference held in Minneapolis, Minn., on Nov. 3-6.

STUDENTS

On Nov. 12, several biology and biochemistry students presented their scientific research projects at the 2016 Southern California Conference for Undergraduate Research (SCCUR) held at UC Riverside. Students presented their works either in 15-minute formal panel presentations chaired by faculty members or in a poster format. Professors **Sylvine Deprele**, PhD, **Luiza Nogaj**, PhD, and **Paul Lee**, PhD, also attended the conference.

Maryann Bonino '61 with Sister Mechtilde Gerber, CSJ, and President Ann McElaney-Johnson

JOURNEYS OF THE HEART: A BOOK ABOUT THE GERBER SISTERS

A NEW BOOK BY MARYANN BONINO '61, Mount Saint Mary's professor emerita, offers a pointed and haunting question: What compels someone to give up a life of opulence in favor of a life of service?

"Journeys of the Heart: Three Sisters, Three Nuns" tells the fascinating story of three sisters who abandoned international lives of privilege for humble lives of service in education and medicine. Thanks to their father's international businesses, during the 1920s and 1930s Ilda, Aline and Anna Maria Gerber crossed the Atlantic Ocean annually, traveling in luxury from their homes in Mexico City to their extended family in Switzerland and Italy — an elegant routine that ended with a dramatic flight from Europe in September 1939.

Bonino's book paints a colorful picture of the family saga, which was peopled by an array of artists and scientists, industrialists and intellectuals, pioneers and statesmen. The sisters' mother was but one of many strong women in their lives who acknowledged the barriers imposed upon their sex while merrily crashing through them.

"Journeys of the Heart" also reveals what led to the sisters' decisions to chart a new path as adults, and chronicles how doggedly their parents initially fought to "save" their daughters from a different kind of sisterhood. It was at a high school in Tucson, operated by the Sisters of St. Joseph of Carondelet, where the girls came to admire the example of the CSJs. Over time, Ilda, Aline and Anna Maria each chose to leave their past selves behind, and take on lives of devotion and service as Sister Aline Marie, Sister Mechtilde and Sister Hildegarde.

The idea for Bonino's book sprouted over talks in the 1980s with Sister Aline Marie and Sister Mechtilde when they both lived in the Mount's Doheny Mansion. Down in the Mansion's basement, Bonino combed through the sisters' seven surviving trunks of family photos and letters, written in five languages — materials stretching back a century and a half.

It's no surprise that Bonino uncovered this story from within the Doheny Mansion. A historical musicologist, Bonino is best known on campus as the founding artistic director of the Da Camera Society of Mount Saint Mary's University. She has presented many a concert in the Mansion's Pompeian Room. Bonino also served a decade as curator of the Doheny Mansion, and wrote a book on the historic house: "The Doheny Mansion: A Biography of a Home." — *Phillip Jordan*

STAFF

Christine Hernandez, associate director of Women's Leadership and Student Involvement, received the Mid-Level Professional of the Year award from the American College Personnel Association's Commission for Student Involvement.

From left, Greg Travis, PhD, director of graduate psychology; Weekend/Evening College students Marcela Manzo and Keith Harris; and Julie Jackson, PsyD, assistant professor of psychology.

Inspired by pizza trees and abuelita

By Anissa V. Rivera

"ONCE UPON A TIME" MAY NOT BE HOW MOST applied psychology assignments begin. But Julie Jackson, PsyD, assistant professor of psychology, struck upon an original idea when Greg Travis, PhD, director of graduate psychology, asked her to guest lecture on child development to Mount undergrads attending the Weekend/Evening College.

Inspired by her colleague Julia Tang, who has her undergraduate students write a children's book on grief, Jackson asked her class to write a children's book on any topic "demonstrating that they understand the cognitive, social and emotional functioning of a child," Jackson said.

Jackson and Travis said they were amazed at the creations, despite a rigorous two-week deadline. Two of the students, Keith Harris '18 and Marcela Manzo '17, even had their books published.

Harris drew inspiration from his young nieces and nephews to create "The Pizza Tree."

"It has always been my thought that if we as adults could start by teaching children basic nutrition in a fun way that they would have a foundation for healthy nutrition before they discover fast food," Harris says.

Jackson said Harris' book hit the mark.

"I really love how Keith's book depicts different races and how it is a fun way of teaching nutrition by asking a mother questions to learn about healthy eating," she says.

Manzo knew she wanted to pay homage to her Mexican heritage in her book, "Remembering Abuelita."

"The story is about a young girl who loses her grandmother and uses her family traditions to cope with the loss," she says.

Travis later encouraged her to get her work published. Manzo asked her husband for computer help. Her older brother and father redid the artwork using mixed media, combining colorful paper and handcut illustrations such as paper flowers and sugar skulls.

The family project evolved into a tribute to Manzo's grandmother and mother, who instilled in her the importance of culture and tradition. "Working together with my family has been the best part of this project," she says.

Both books are available on Kindle through Amazon and "Remembering Abuelita" is available in print, also through Amazon.

A meteoric find on campus

Discovering a space rock in the Doheny Mansion's backyard

By Phillip Jordan

RUSSELL THOMAS '18 MFT spent his childhood summers pointing his telescopes to the stars, dreaming of a big discovery. Those dreams didn't fade as he grew older, even now, as he studies marriage and family therapy in Mount Saint Mary's Graduate Division, and works as a behavioral specialist with L.A. schoolchildren who are on the autism spectrum. Thomas still spends much of his free time looking up, studying the heavens.

Last summer, he finally made his big find — not by gazing skyward, but by going for a swim at the University's Doheny Campus pool.

Tucked in a corner of the grounds surrounding the pool, hidden behind some landscaping, Thomas noticed a large, odd-sized rock. He'd been on the hunt for meteorites lately — even adding "find a meteorite" to his bucket list. And this pockmarked, rust-colored rock at the Mount certainly looked like one.

It had the signature "thumbprints" most meteorites have — smooth holes that form when it would have burned and melted passing through the earth's atmosphere. Thomas brought a magnet back one day and it stuck to the rock. He brought a small metal bar another day and tapped on the rock; the bar vibrated in his hands.

"I'd seen meteorites in museums, and I knew this looked and felt like one," Thomas says, "but it didn't make any sense that a meteorite would just be sitting right here on campus."

It was. Thomas had identified an estimated 150-pound iron meteorite that had broken off from the giant Canyon Diablo meteorite — one so massive that, when it smashed into what is now northern Arizona some 50,000 years ago, it created a crater almost three-quarters of a mile in diameter and nearly 600 feet deep.

We know this because a sample of the meteorite has been examined and tested by the best-known classifier of iron meteorites in the world, John Wasson, PhD. Wasson is a professor emeritus in UCLA's Earth, Planetary and Space Sciences department and curator of the UCLA Collection of Meteorites.

What we don't know is how this space rock wound up at the Mount.

Thomas, of course, is not the first person to have discovered the rock. It has likely been "discovered" many times over — by Native Americans, miners, perhaps by geologists. And, most likely, by Edward L. Doheny, the oil baron whose family gave the Mount's Mansion and downtown L.A. campus its name — and its land.

Meteorite expert John Wasson of UCLA and Russell Thomas '18 MFT inspect the meteorite discovered near the Doheny Campus pool.

"Doheny was a mining prospector before he hit oil in California," says Victoria McCargar, University archivist. "He had worked for the U.S. Geological Survey in his youth and traveled around the Southwest."

She thinks Doheny likely picked up the meteorite on one of those trips, or on a later trip when he and his wife Estelle rode across the southwest in their own rail car (named The Estelle). Back home at the Mansion, exotic palms and rare botanical specimens once surrounded the Dohenys' swimming pool, all housed under a glass-and-steel enclosure to form a greenhouse-bathhouse combo called the Palm House. Perhaps Doheny staged the meteorite there and then, after his death, the rock was left, forgotten.

Over time the Palm House was cleared out, its greenhouse façade decayed and the swimming pool area restored for the University. Through it all, the rock must have stayed. Facilities employees often saw it through the years, wondering if it was indeed something like a meteorite, says Carlos Garcia, the Mount's longtime facilities manager. But until now, the hidden rock had never been brought to light.

"That's what makes the story so fun," Thomas says. "There's still so much mystery to it. How did Doheny get it here? How many people have walked right by it, not knowing it's something from outer space? It's crazy to think something so unique and so valuable has been sitting right there for so long."

Next for the Mount's meteorite: Certification and naming by the international Meteoritical Society, followed by a viewing for the University community. Then, the meteorite will be on the move again, this time on long-term loan to the UCLA Collection of Meteorites, where it will take its place among one of the largest collections of certified meteorites in the United States.

EAT GREEN • DE-STRESS • SLEEP WELL • MOVE MORE

Join the movement

The University launches a comprehensive wellness initiative that will transform our campuses and our culture

ONE OF THE BEST LESSONS WE'VE LEARNED from our founding Sisters of St. Joseph of Carondelet? It is always our responsibility to respond to the needs of the times.

Today, the times are calling for strong, confident, resilient leaders. To fortify our emerging leaders, Mount Saint Mary's is excited to launch a University-wide wellness movement centered on the principles of inclusion, empowerment and personal wellbeing.

Research shows that health and wellness play an important role in academic success, effective leadership, potential for growth and career satisfaction. Personal wellness also emboldens. Resilience lets us spring back from personal lows. It gives our psyche stability in times of deep stress and adversity. Becoming resilient requires an inner strength that comes when the whole being — mind, body and spirit — is healthy.

PHOTO BY CARRIE ROSEMA

That's why the Mount Wellness movement will take a comprehensive approach to promoting personal health and wellbeing on campus. The goal is to encourage students — as well as faculty, staff and the entire Mount community — to embrace a healthy lifestyle, one that gets them more physically active, making smarter food choices, sleeping better and managing their stress.

This focus on wellness is inspired by a sobering fact: Two-thirds of Mount Saint Mary's students report that they enter their University years feeling unhealthy. The Mount Wellness movement hopes to flip that statistic on its head: By 2025, our goal is for at least two-thirds of Mount students to feel healthy by the time they graduate.

We're on our way thanks to the advice of our students. In fall 2016, students replied to a needs assessment survey. The results highlighted four areas of focus that now form the tenets of our wellness movement: move more, eat green, de-stress and sleep well. This feedback has helped guide the plan that the University has crafted — one that will create a positive, lasting culture of wellness on our campuses.

move more

The survey showed that only 22 percent of students reported getting at least 150 minutes of moderate or 75 minutes of vigorous physical activity per week. Even more startling is that 29 percent of students reported getting no physical activity per week.

Through the Move More component of the plan, more recreation center space (existing and new) will be dedicated to physical activity. Free monthly "how-to" classes will be offered to introduce students to new activities such as kickboxing, yoga and Zumba. All incoming students will be offered a fitness center orientation during their first semester and all students can get a free fitness assessment, including cardio, strength, flexibility and balance, through the Doctor of Physical Therapy program. The DPT program will also provide pre-season conditioning for club sports team members.

eat green

Another goal is to increase the number of students eating fruits, vegetables and whole grains each day. According to the survey respondents, only 11 percent eat four or more servings of fruits and vegetables each day.

The Eat Green plan calls for even healthier food choices at the campus cafeterias, limiting the number of fried foods available and offering more nutritional snacks from vending machines. A monthly on-campus farmer's market, a resident nutritionist and cooking demonstrations will also promote increased consumption of fruits, vegetables and whole grains.

MOUNT WELLNESS

de-stress

More than half of the students who took the survey said that they have stress levels of eight or higher (with 10 being the maximum) on a daily basis. Aside from implementing a stress management workshop series and mindfulness training, the De-Stress component will help students understand the nature of stress so they can recognize their limits and learn how to manage it. A resiliency program called SCoRE®: Student Curriculum on Resilience Education will help students learn how to cope with stress brought on by personal, social and academic events.

sleep well

Only a third of students reported sleeping at least seven hours per night. To help more students get a healthy amount of sleep each night, the University will create quiet rooms for rest and relaxation on both campuses. Students can also participate in the College Sleep Questionnaire, which will provide tailored guidelines for each student to help them improve their sleep habits.

For more information about the Mount Wellness movement, go to **msmu.edu/wellness**.

THE WELLNESS PAVILION

Key to the whole movement is building an environment that encourages healthier choices. The Chalon Campus Wellness Pavilion, *left,* a new 35,000-square-foot recreation space, will house an aquatic center, basketball and volleyball courts, exercise rooms, studios for low-impact activities and for dance, yoga, aerobics and cycling, and a sleep studio.

Included in the wellness plans for the Doheny Campus are an upgraded fitness center with new equipment, an outdoor interval circuit training system, a two-mile walking route with wellness markers, a physical therapy lab for assessments, vending machines with healthier snack choices, and a quiet room for relaxation.

DISCOVERING LEADERS WITHIN

Guided by the core principles of the University's Mount Leads initiative, students identify their leadership styles and learn to lead in their own way.

BY PIA ORENSE
PHOTOS BY CARRIE ROSEMA

Vroniqa "Ku'ulei" Faustino '19

Arlene Valdes '20

AT THE MOUNT, ALL ARE CALLED TO LEAD — definitely the outgoing and the bold, but also the introverts, the shy students who may say few words during meetings but follow up with brilliant ideas.

"Here at the Mount we believe that leaders are made, not born. Everyone has the capacity to lead," says Rosalyn Kempf, EdM, EdD, director of women's leadership and student involvement.

The University provides several opportunities for students to develop their leadership style and, in some cases, discover that they actually can be leaders. This school year, Kempf's office launched Mount Leads, an initiative that unifies the experience for all students and provides a common vision and language to define leadership. Under Mount Leads, students are guided by four core principles: awareness of self/personal wellness; ethical decision-making and integrity; critical thinking and communication skills; and active citizenship. "Through exploration of the Mount Leads principles, students can realize their leadership potential, connect the skills they learn through various leadership experiences and articulate who they are as leaders," says Kempf.

Mount leaders are confident in their abilities and seek to improve and strengthen themselves through both active participation as well as personal self-reflection.

AWARENESS OF SELF & PERSONAL WELLNESS

For biology major Vroniqa "Ku'ulei" Faustino '19, her Hawaiian heritage influences her leadership style. "In everything I do, I want to come across as having aloha," she says.

The spirit of aloha, in its simplest explanation, is love and gratitude. "It's how you should treat people — you show them love and gratitude whenever you see them," she says. "The people working with you need to know that you will work together and that you will succeed."

She believes in the power of collaboration and cooperation. As a leader, she takes the time to listen to other people's ideas and figure out a way to mesh different suggestions into one coherent strategy. Then, at the end of each day, she spends some moments reflecting on her words and actions. "I ask myself, 'Did I do that right? Did I use the right words when I was critiquing something?' I just want to make sure I'm coming across as a good leader and I treat people with respect. That's important to me," she says.

Mount leaders are committed to the greater good and actively seek ways to effect change through engagement with others in their campus and local communities.

ACTIVE CITIZENSHIP

Leadership is not just about one person, it's about being able to work as part of a team, says Arlene Valdes '20. "I came to college thinking that there is one leader at the top with all the responsibilities and this person has to serve everyone else," she says. "But my perspective started to change when I realized that leadership means several individuals working together."

The pre-nursing major, who is also working on a minor in film, gravitated toward sports when looking for leadership opportunities. A cross-country runner in high school, Valdes joined the Athenian Fitness Club, the Pa' Bailar dance club and the Student Wellness Advisory Group.

She's committed to seeking more leadership activities each semester, to see where else she can make a difference. "A leader is someone who cares about everyone," she says. "I want to do something that I'm passionate about and I care about, and that will also help other students."

Ilse Llamas-Medina '18

Melanie Sava '17

Mount leaders affirm and clarify their values through their experiences and use them to make ethical and moral decisions in their lives.

ETHICAL DECISION-MAKING & INTEGRITY

With group leadership, even the soft-spoken students get a seat at the table.

"I'm more of an observer. I tend to step back and look at the bigger picture," says Ilse Llamas-Medina '18, a junior majoring in social work and Spanish. "I used to think that I had to be a certain way to be a leader. But Dr. Kempf showed me that there are different ways and different places where you can be a leader."

Llamas-Medina plans to get a master's degree in social work after graduating from the Mount and foresees that the leadership skills she's building right now, such as conflict resolution, will be useful in her career as a social worker.

She has several roles on campus — resident assistant, writing tutor, liturgy coordinator for Campus Ministry, vice president of the Latinas Unidas student club — but her involvement with music brings the most personal fulfillment. She has been playing the clarinet since fifth grade and is a member of the Mount Orchestra. She was the head drum major in her high school and every week, she returns to her alma mater as a marching band leadership instructor and volunteer mentor.

"As a kid, growing up a certain way or at a certain place, you think being a leader is out of your reach and only certain people can do it," she says. Now that she knows better, she thinks "it's important to talk to children and let them know everybody has opportunities and everybody can be a leader."

Mount leaders are able to communicate effectively and articulate their ideas and thoughts in a manner that upholds their opinions and beliefs while respecting those of others.

CRITICAL THINKING AND COMMUNICATION SKILLS

A leadership scholar for four years, Melanie Sava '17 will graduate this spring more confident and more self-assured than she was as a first-year student. Innately an introvert, she had to force herself out of her comfort zone several times during her leadership training.

"As a leader, you have to be able to push yourself, to not be afraid to push past barriers," she says.

She signed up to be an orientation leader, a commuter mentor, peer tutor, and founded the campus' Oxfam America Club. "I consider myself a servant leader. Everything I do is rooted in my desire to help people."

This year, Sava is the president of the Student Government Association and an award-winning member of the Moot Court and Mock Trial teams. "You can't be afraid to talk when you're in Moot Court. You have to be able to think on your feet, respond quickly and thoughtfully," she says.

After graduating from the Mount in May — with a double major in political science and global politics and a double minor in pre-law and women's studies and leadership — she will head to Yale Law School.

"I can definitely see how much I've grown, and so much of that is because of what I learned in the leadership program and the opportunities I got from the political science department and because of the Mount as an institution," she says. "The skills become a part of who you are."

ZOOMING IN ON LIFE

OnJonet Williams '18 brings diversity in Los Angeles into focus. Her documentaries about living in L.A., including one about staying fit as a college student, have been making waves at film festivals.

By Anissa V. Rivera
Photos by Watchara Phomicinda

PHOTO BY WATCHARA PHOMICINDA

PHOTO BY WATCHARA PHOMICINDA

ONJONET WILLIAMS' L.A. STORY is a cacophony of moving figures, street noises, the clink of wine glasses, the possibility of an opening stanza, a first act, the face of a woman on a plane taking flight. Williams, 20, is a junior majoring in film, media and social justice. She is already an award-winning filmmaker, at home under the Los Angeles lights.

"My favorite thing about L.A. is the diversity," she says. "So many people from different places are in one area. It's really inspiring to be around so many people who are striving for greatness. I've definitely fallen in love with L.A. I'm in love with the good and the bad. Everyone has a different story and each of them is worth listening to."

In November, her film "Please Plateau" was an official selection in the Stories Lived Film Festival online. The documentary focused on her week of waking up at 5 a.m. every day and running three miles from the Doheny Campus to USC. It was Williams' way of running past her comfort zone and stretching her mind and body to the limit.

"Most people think that reaching a plateau in their life is a bad thing but it's not," she says in the film. "It gives you an opportunity to push through and do something you've never done before."

Another film, "Suicide City," was screened at the Slim Cinema Vertical Film Festival in New York. "It was a film that reflected my feelings about L.A.," Williams says. "A quote I really love from the film is, 'Our dreams turn into wishes so our 9 to 5 just feels like a pile of dirty dishes.'"

In December, she flew to Washington, D.C., to accept an award for her animated short "Patent" from the Intellectual Property Owners

Education Foundation.

And this April, her film "This Never Goes Away: My Mental Trip," a brave and honest look at mental disorders, was chosen as one of the top eight finalists in the UPTOGOOD Impact Film Festival 2017.

It was an auspicious way for this filmmaker, poet, musician, spoken word artist and film editor to end the year and begin a busy new one. Williams hones her craft filming and editing for film festivals, and working on personal passion projects. Favorite subjects include visits home to Delaware, her journey recovering from a car accident, being vegan and living in Los Angeles.

The inspiration and the stories keep coming.

Stories were easy to find: Abused by her biological mother, Williams suffered developmental delays and anxiety attacks from a young age. Her adoptive mother ("my mother, just my mother," she says) fought for her to go to mainstream school, and receive speech and other therapies.

Rhonda Stone also raised the curtain on her daughter's artistic outlets, encouraging her to learn to play the trombone, piano, guitar, flute and other instruments before putting a Panasonic camera in her hands.

"I was 10 when I picked up my mother's Panasonic camera," she says. "I would do magic tricks by learning the different functions on the camera and filming scenes. Before that, I would always write short poems and stories."

OnJonet (pronounced "AWN JOH-nay") would soon enroll in theater classes and even started learning Chinese.

"I traveled to China at the age of 13 with a group of other student ambassadors," she says. "While in China, I saw a homeless man eating out of a trash can and for some reason, it affected me. I wanted to know his story and I wanted to help him. That sparked my interest in documentary filmmaking."

In high school, Williams made her mark on stage, winning Delaware Teen Idol in 2013 and in public speaking, earning top prizes in extemporaneous and prepared speaking competitions.

Williams also won awards for her films. She won the Celebrity Choice Award through Delaware's Prevention Coalition two years in a row, first for a film she made on substance abuse and another on bullying.

Deciding on a college to continue honing her crafts, Williams chose Mount Saint Mary's because it was an environment she trusted.

"I wanted to be challenged and I wanted to learn how to work and study in a completely different place than I was comfortable in," she says. "I feel that I made the perfect choice. I was telling my friends that if you can make it (here) you can make it anywhere! This school has some of the most amazing people with so much potential. Creating content that makes a difference is what I want to do with my life and this program allows me to connect with everything I've loved since I was a little kid."

Find Williams at www.onjonetwilliams.com and at YouTube.com/OnJOfficial.

Kayli Fortun '13, '16 MFA and Charles Bunce '16 MFA, chair of the Mount's film, media and communication department, at the Glendale International Film Festival.

FINDING SUCCESS

The MFA in Film & Television program has been enjoying plenty of success in the film festival circuit recently.

"Finding Fortune," a pilot episode for a family drama series produced, written and directed by Charles Bunce '16 MFA, director of the Mount's film, media and communication department, and Kayli Fortun '13, '16 MFA, won the Sheila Varian Award at the EQUUS Film Festival in November in New York. It was also named Best in Festival at the Glendale International Film Festival, Gold Winner (Television Pilot) at the International Independent Film Awards, and Best Actress Under 18 at the Hollywood Boulevard Film Festival.

Bunce shot and edited the project, and co-wrote the pilot with Fortun, who produced and directed. Based on a true story, the pilot follows a father and daughter as they race to rescue a prized horse accidentally sent to slaugher by a dubious breeder. Their journey results in the foundation of a horse rescue team, which would be the focus of the ongoing series.

Bunce and Fortun are currently working with MFA alums Richard Handley '16 and Brian Hanson '16 on "The Black String," a psychological thriller about a young man whose world begins to unravel after a night with a mysterious woman. The project was featured in the trade magazine Variety after Frankie Muniz, who starred in the television series "Malcolm in the Middle," joined the cast to play the lead character.

"Desert Foreigners," a documentary by Abraam Mikhael '17, was nominated for Best Short Documentary in the Oaxaca Film Festival. And the screenplay "Crossroads" by Giancarlo Fusi '17 has received several awards as well.

For more information about the MFA in Film & Television program, go to msmu.edu/graduate.

engage

GET INVOLVED AT THE MOUNT

MANY HANDS MAKE LIGHT WORK. We invite you to join us. Mount Saint Mary's University supporters are recognized in the annual President's Report, receive Mount Magazine and attend special events throughout the year. Most importantly, Mount supporters are able to make a difference in the lives of current students. How? Let us count the ways…

VOLUNTEER
Do you have a little extra time and a lot of affection for the Mount? Become a volunteer — we can always use an extra hand!

THE MOUNT FUND
Annual contributions from alums, parents and friends support the University's greatest needs. The Mount Fund provides critical support for students and faculty. Every gift counts!

WELLNESS MOVEMENT
A wellness movement is underway at the Mount to help our students become strong and healthy leaders. One way we plan to accomplish that is by building a Wellness Pavilion at Chalon that will house new health, fitness and sports programs. Help our community be a mighty force in the world: msmu.edu/wellness.

MOUNT ASSOCIATES
Mount Associates provide critical funding for tuition assistance and academic programs with annual contributions of $1,000 or greater. Mount Associates enjoy special fellowship at unique events designed to foster cultural and social enrichment.

HERITAGE SOCIETY
The Heritage Society, established in 1992, is comprised of alums, friends and faculty who have made plans to provide future support for the University. Notify us now of a planned gift and enjoy the benefits of joining the Heritage Society.

DOHENY MANSION DOCENT
Doheny Mansion docents plan, lead and assist in public and private tours of the Mansion. This volunteer opportunity is open to alums, students and friends of the University. Special training sessions will give volunteers the knowledge, skills and confidence necessary to offer successful tours. For more information on how to become a docent, contact Mary Sloper at mary@sloper.org or 310.373.2874.

JOIN IN
For more information — or to explore other ways to engage at the Mount — please contact Megan Shockro, senior director of development, at mshockro@msmu.edu or 213.477.2875 or visit msmu.edu/support.

WELLNESS MOVEMENT: The Wellness Pavilion at Chalon will house new health, fitness and sports programs.

SCHOLARSHIP LUNCHEON: Scholarship recipients at this annual event meet and personally thank their generous supporters.

MOUNT ASSOCIATES: Susan (Becker) Sargent '75 and William Sargent at an event in the Doheny Mansion.

PROFILE OF PHILANTHROPY

Michele Rhilinger ’75

FOR MICHELE RHILINGER ’75, the time she spent at Mount Saint Mary’s University was a gift. She learned to use every opportunity and turn them into life-building experiences.

Now Rhilinger is the one giving the gift: a $5 million planned giving contribution, the largest in Mount history.

“Like many of today’s students, I had to pay for my college education through scholarships, loans and jobs,” she says. “I credit MSMU with getting my career started, first through a business internship during my senior year and then by giving me an opportunity to pursue a job interview with a Fortune 100 company.”

> ‘All through my career I took advantage of job opportunities that provided vast amounts of experiences. The skills and life experiences that I got were priceless building blocks to form who I am today.’
>
> *Michele Rhilinger ’75*

That company was the Ford Motor Company in Los Angeles, the first of three major corporations Rhilinger has worked for. After 14 years with Ford, she became business director of Fisher Controls International, Inc., in Iowa. Rhilinger joined Weyerhaeuser Company in Seattle in 1994, contributing to the success of the $16 billion forest products company until her recent retirement as a vice president.

Starting with small, annual gifts to the Mount, Rhilinger created an endowed scholarship in her father’s name in 2005.

“Once I retired, I made a more formal and longer-term financial commitment to MSMU through a legal estate plan,” she says. “So, it wasn’t so much a ‘decision’ as it was something that I just had to do since I was now truly enjoying the fruits of my education and career.”

Rhilinger treasures the friendships she developed while living in Mount residence halls as well as lessons learned from faculty and staff. Number one: Seize every opportunity.

“During my time at MSMU, I was part of the yearbook team and learned technical and interpersonal skills,” she says. “I worked in the Admissions Department where I grew confident meeting and speaking in front of groups. I did an internship in retail, which helped me develop sales skills. And I took advantage of an opportunity to interview for — and get — a corporate job in a male-dominated industry (automotive). None of these opportunities were things that I was looking to do. All through my career I took advantage of job opportunities that provided vast amounts of experiences. The skills and life experiences that I got were priceless building blocks to form who I am today.” — *Anissa Rivera*

PASSION AND FOCUS: CAREER ADVICE FOR YOUNG WOMEN

Michele Rhilinger ’75 learned a lot in her rise up the ranks of the corporate world. Here is some of her advice for young women just starting their careers:

- Be passionate (do what you love).
- Be a team player (it’s not about control; it’s about influence).
- Stay focused (don’t be distracted by what others are doing).
- Earn your way every day (deliver results).
- Be ethical and honest (be known for having unwavering integrity).
- Have fun and be yourself.

Cecelia "Ceci" (Schmahl) Stratford '64 and Charles J. Kamphausen have influenced and mentored hundreds of women interested in aviation.

PROFILE OF PHILANTHROPY

Ceci Stratford '64

CECELIA "CECI" (SCHMAHL) STRATFORD '64 DISCOVERED HER LOVE OF FLYING in the mid-1970s and she has spent the last four decades enjoying her favorite pastime at every opportunity. In more recent years, she has expanded what was once a simple hobby to her life's passion: to ensure an increased number of women gain exposure, training and career opportunities in the aviation industry.

Through her engagement as a mentor with Aviation Explorers, the Ninety-Nines (Women Pilots) and other organizations, Stratford has influenced the lives of hundreds of women interested in aviation. She has been invited to speak to young audiences, provided hands-on flight training, contributed to scholarship awards, and dedicated her time to mentor women through flight school.

She has a deep appreciation for the impact strong women leaders can make on the lives of young women. In 2011, in loving memory of her father, she created the Schmahl/Stratford Endowed Scholarship, ensuring that Mount STEM students receive financial assistance in perpetuity.

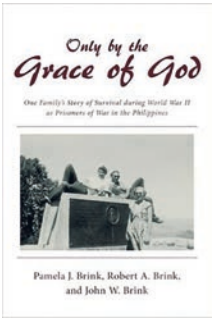
Her more recent support of the newly established Center for the Advancement of Women, which is in its first year of operation, will provide resources to develop new research initiatives and programs. The Center's director, Emerald Archer, explains: "Ceci's generous pledge to support the Center over the next five years is critical to our ability to expand current leadership opportunities and ensure our students continue to benefit directly from our programs."

Stratford volunteered at a recent event hosted by the Mount, STEM Expand Your Horizons, designed for middle school students to learn more about careers in science, technology, engineering and math-related fields.

Stratford demonstrates the critical positive benefits of developing leaders through her dedicated efforts to help pave the way for women. Her continued support will bolster the Mount community to ensure it stands behind those who dare to dream, and that we do all we can to turn those dreams into a reality. — *Megan Shockro*

CLASS NOTES

1956 Pamela Brink has written, with her two brothers, a memoir of their time as prisoners of war in the Philippines during WWII. The book, titled "Only by the Grace of God: One Family's Story of Survival during World War II as Prisoners of War in the Philippines," is available on Amazon. She is a retired professor of nursing research at the University of Iowa. While a student at the Mount, she did some literary writing and was a runner-up in Atlanta Monthly's National Creative Writing contest. ▲



1957 Raquel Casillas was honored in May 2016 as Volunteer of the Year by the city of Ontario, Calif., and was inducted into the Ontario Walk of Fame, where she now has her own star. She has volunteered for 20 years with the Travelers Aid of the Inland Empire, helping guests at the Ontario International Airport's visitor information booth. She was the Grand Marshall of the 2016 Ontario Fourth of July Parade.

1965 Diane de Anda announces her new book, "L.A. Flash," a collection of short stories set in Los Angeles. More information about this collection and her other books can be viewed at deandabookshop.com. ◄

1971 Madeleine (Miller) Cuciti, after 30 years in the computer field, is enjoying retirement, her grandchildren, traveling and hobbies.

1974 Kathryn (Knemeyer) Gasperini was fortunate to travel to France in May 2016 with Mount Saint Mary's President Ann McElaney-Johnson and many wonderful folks associated with the University. She made many friends as they walked in the footsteps of the founders. Living in Richmond, Va., she is a retired lieutenant colonel from the U.S. Army Reserve Nurse Corps. She and her husband, Richard, have two grown sons and five grandchildren. She is also a docent at the Virginia Museum of Fine Arts. ▲

1983 Lisa (Kirchen) Wierwille is currently the president of the Assistance League of Los Angeles.

1985 Therese (Bear) Parmele works part time as a school nurse at Viewpoint School in Calabasas, Calif. Her daughter, Nicole Parmele, is enrolled in the photography program that was once Brooks Institute and will graduate in May.

1992 Zoila Gallegos-Garcia '96 MS attributes her dedication to serving others to her education at MSMU. She was instrumental in obtaining a new library at Los Padrinos Juvenile Hall, where she is a teacher and reading specialist. She was featured in the Los Angeles Times in September 2016 for her efforts to establish the state-of-the-art library inside the South L.A. juvenile hall. The library holds 4,000 books and has a librarian on-site. She says that the Mount, where she earned associate and bachelor's degrees in liberal arts and a master of science in counseling psychology, nurtured her strong belief in serving others.

2003 Jasmin (Riehl) Jimeno, DPT, received an Outstanding Service Award from the Federation of State Boards of Physical Therapy and was inducted into the Academy of Advanced Item Writers Hall of Fame at the group's November 2016 meeting.

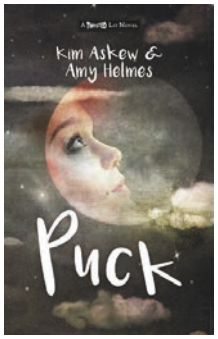
2006 Hana Abuershaid received a doctor of medicine (MD) from Ross University of Medicine in 2011. She did her residency training in Internal Medicine at Wyckoff Heights Medical School in Brooklyn, N.Y. In September 2015, she joined Sound Physicians Hospitalist Group in Stockton, Calif.

2008 Sandy Alcala received a master's degree in public health from Keck School of Medicine at USC in 2016.

2009 Lew Dauber MA just finished working on the new TV series "Lethal Weapon." His character received co-star billing. He is an instructor in the humanities program at the Mount.

2016 Kim Askew MFA and writing partner Amy Helmes have released their fourth novel, "Puck," a take on

Shakespeare's "A Midsummer Night's Dream." The heroine, Puck, thinks life as a foster kid can't get any worse until she's abducted in the middle of the night and taken to wilderness brat camp. Early reviewers say "it draws you in, this little novel" and that it's "edgy, funny and beautifully bittersweet." It can be found at your local bookstore and at Barnes & Noble, Indiebound, or Amazon. ◀



Do you have news to share? Send your updates to alums@msmu.edu.

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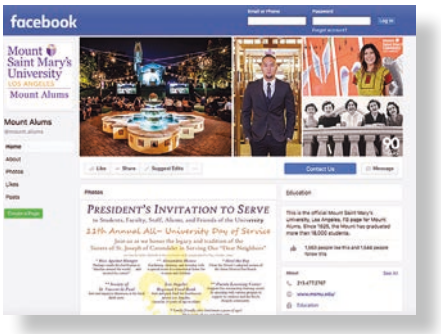

/mountalums

MARRIAGES

The Alumnae Association extends congratulations to the following alums on their recent weddings:

'86 Andrea Righetti to James Fields
'05 April Aguirre to Quirico Montes ▲
'07 Andrea Melgoza to Mario Melendez Jr.
'16 Erika Huesca-Riss to Brian Salazar

BIRTHS & ADOPTIONS

Congratulations to the following alums and their spouses on their new additions:

'05 Silas Alexander to Rebecca (Levin) Arce, 1st child

IN MEMORIAM

'48 Irene (Stehly) Deviln
'52 Husband of Joan (Murphy) Maechling
'52 Marion (Meyer) Power
'54 Brother of Barbara (Dobrott) Stapleford
'56 Husband of Elaine (Pfiffner) Believau
'59 Connie Jeanne Herman
'60 Husband of Marilyn (Brassor) Nagel
'64 Mary Lou (Getson) LaVallie
'68 Mother of Carol (Feloney) Garibay
'69 Mother of Wai-Soo (Wong) Koo
'82 Brenda (Mijangos) Castillo
'98 Mother of Jane (Harris) Nadeau
'99 Tasha (Schindler) Bezner
'99 Michella (Dinielli) Ortega
'00 Alice (Blair) Simmons

They will be remembered in the Masses, prayers and good works of the Sisters of St. Joseph and the Mount community.

MEET THE NEW DIRECTOR OF ALUMNAE RELATIONS

KATE FERGUSSON JOINED Mount Saint Mary's as director of alumnae relations and volunteer engagement this spring semester. She comes to the Mount from the USC Alumni Association, where she served as the associate director of engagement programs for over three years. Prior to USC, Fergusson worked in Washington, D.C., where she managed nationwide volunteers in advocacy, fundraising and community outreach capacities for Reading is Fundamental and First Book, nonprofits providing educational resources to underserved communities.

"I came to the Mount not only because of the incredible mission, but also because of the dedicated and passionate community," Fergusson says. "I'm truly excited about the years ahead and what it holds for the Mount community as we strengthen and grow our Alumnae Association."

She received her bachelor's degree in sociology from Occidental College and master's degree in public administration from the USC Price School of Public Policy. She enjoys travel and spent one year teaching English to adult learners in Quito, Ecuador.

She may be reached at kfergusson@msmu.edu or 213.477.2512.

Clerics from the Los Angeles Archdiocese process from the St. Joseph Administration Building to the Charles Willard Coe Memorial Library to participate in its formal dedication liturgy, May 11, 1947. At the end of the procession is the presider, Archbishop John Cantwell.

Exterior of the Charles Willard Coe Memorial Library taken shortly after its completion in early spring, 1947. The original entrance facade featured gothic spires and other cast-concrete stonework, some of which was removed for safety reasons in the 1990s.

Special liturgy for a special library

FOR CATHOLIC COLLEGES AND UNIVERSITIES, no building is complete without its formal dedication, a religious ceremony seeking God's blessing on the new structure and all who will be using it.

The Mount has seen many of these liturgies at both campuses over its 92 years, but none was grander than the dedication 70 years ago on May 11, 1947, of the new library at Chalon.

Archbishop John J. Cantwell presided over the afternoon's events. These began with a solemn procession of church dignitaries from the St. Joseph Administration Building to the library as students in academic garb, religious and lay faculty, staff and guests lined the way.

This was followed by the blessing and sprinkling with holy water of the main rooms on all four floors on the library. Another procession then took everyone up to Mary Chapel, where Cantwell presided over Benediction of the Blessed Sacrament — a solemn liturgy involving Gregorian chants, prayers and incense. After this came the usual congratulatory speeches by visiting VIPs, after which everyone returned to the library for tours and a reception. It was the next to last time the archbishop — fondly considered the Mount's "spiritual father" — visited the college before his death a few months later on Oct. 27.

There would be many more (and simpler) dedications in the Mount's future — including Carondelet Hall (1959), Drudis-Biada Hall (1974), Mercy Chapel and McIntyre Hall (1984), and Doheny's own new library in 1999.

But the dedication and blessings bestowed on the new Charles Willard Coe Library in May 1947 would be the final echo of the earliest years of the University.

— Victoria McCargar, University archivist

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HOMECOMING 2017

Are you ready for the biggest alumnae event of the year? Mark your calendars for Homecoming on Oct. 14. It's a fantastic time to reconnect with friends and classmates and see how the Mount has grown into the university it is today! This year, we will not only induct the class of 1967 into the revered Golden Grads, but will also celebrate the reunion classes of 1977, 1982, 1987, 1992, 1997, 2002, 2007 and 2012 for their 45th, 40th, 35th, 30th, 25th, 20th, 15th, 10th and 5th reunions. More information about the festivities will be posted this summer at alums.msmu.edu.

Upcoming

May 5
Graduate Commencement Ceremony, St. Vincent de Paul Church, Los Angeles. msmu.edu/commencement

May 8
Commencement Ceremony, Microsoft Theater, Los Angeles. msmu.edu/commencement

June 3
Da Camera Society concert: Cindy Wu, violin, and Orion Weiss, piano, Doheny Mansion. dacamera.org

June 11
Da Camera Society concert: Monty Alexander, jazz piano, with Hassan Shakur, bass, Doheny Mansion. dacamera.org

June 25
Mount Associates gathering, Japanese American National Museum, Los Angeles. hschraeder@msmu.edu

Sept. 16
Women's Leadership Conference, Chalon Campus. msmu.edu/wlc

Oct. 14
Homecoming, Chalon Campus. alums.msmu.edu.